

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-02
INR-10 L-03 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 /076 W
-----067187 261703Z /43

O 261600Z JUL 78 ZFF-4
FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1884
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

UNCLAS PRETORIA 4278

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, WA
SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: PRESS ACCOUNTS ON WALVIS BAY TACTICS
AT NEW YORK

1. FOLLOWING ARTICLE HEADLINED "SWA PLAN MAY BE THE
GAME OF BLUFF" RAN IN JOHANNESBURG "STAR" OF JULY 26.
ARTICLE IS WRITTEN BY KEVIN JACOBS AND DATELINED NEW
YORK.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

"THE PLAN FOR INDEPENDENCE IN SWA/NAMIBIA SEEMS TODAY
TO BE THE SUBJECT OF AN UNEASY GAME OF BLUFF, STRADDLED
BY OPPOSING ARGUMENTS WHICH WILL EITHER SET IT IN MOTION
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OR COLLAPSE IT IN THE NEXT FE DAYS.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, MR. PIK BOTHA,
ARRIVES HERE TODAY, WITH THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT
AND THE FIVE-NATION WESTERN NEGOTIATING TEAM APPARENTLY
STANDING BY THEIR CONTRASTING COMMITMENTS TO WALVIS
BAY.

SWAPO'S PRESIDENT, MR. SAM NUJOMA, HAS CAST FURTHER DOUBT ON THE STATUS OF THE PLAN BY EMPHASIZING, IN A STATEMENT YESTERDAY, THAT SWAPO HAD NOT FORMALLY ACCEPTED THE WESTERN PROPOSALS.

THE APPARENT REFUSAL BY EITHER SIDE -- AT LEAST PUBLICLY -- TO MODIFY OR SOFTEN THEIR POSITIONS ON THE POTENTIALLY DAMAGING ISSUE OF WALVIS BAY SUGGESTS A LAST-MINUTE GAME OF BLUFF.

BUT SOURCES IN NEW YORK POINT OUT THAT IT IS NOT A TRAIT OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEALINGS.

THE UNDERLINE THE UNCOMPROMISING PUBLIC COMMITMENT BY MR. BOTHA AND THE PRIME MINISTER, MR. VORSTER, NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PLAN IF THE STATUS OF WALVIS BAY IS TAKEN UP BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

FULFILLING THEIR PART OF A TRADE-OFF WITH SWAPO STATE, (SIC) WESTERN DIPLOMATS PLAN TO TABLE A RESOLUTION WHICH -- IN ITS PRESENT FORM -- CALLS FOR THE "REINTEGRATION OF THE PORT INTO NAMIBIAN TERRITORY.

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IT ALSO DECLARES THAT SOUTH AFRICA MUST NOT USE THE PORT IN A WAY PREJUDICIAL TO INDEPENDENCE OR DAMAGING TO THE TERRITORY'S ECONOMY.

SOURCES SAY THE WESTERN-DRAFTED RESOLUTION IS THE BEST POSSIBLE FORMULATION. IT OFFERS NO MANDATORY PROVISIONS ENFORCEABLE BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL AND MAKES NO DIRECT DEMANDS ON SOUTH AFRICA'S LEGAL POSITION, THEY SAY.

SOURCES AT THE UN SAY IT WAS DRAFTED AT THE LAST MEETING IN LUANDA OF THE FIVE AND SWAPO'S LEADERSHIP, SUGGESTING IT MUST CARRY THE AFRICANS' APPROVAL.

A FORMAL SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON NAMIBIA IS EXPECTED TOMORROW.

BUT THE INDEPENDENCE PLAN REMAINS UNEASILY POISED BETWEEN SUCCESS AND DISASTER.

US HOPE

DIPLOMATS AT THE SOUTH AFRICAN MISSION TO THE UN
COULD NOT CONFIRM MR. BOTHA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE
EXPECTED DEBATE. BUT HIS TACTICS WILL PROBABLY BE
DETERMINED BY STATEMENTS ON WALVIS BAY BY WESTERN
DIPLOMATS AND MR. NUJOMA.

TH US STATE DEPARTMENT EXPRESSED HOPE THAT
EXAMINATION BY SOUTH AFRICA OF THE PROPOSED WALVIS
BAY DECLARATION WOULD SHOW THAT THE CONTACT GROUP
PROPOSAL REPRESENTS THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE RESOLUTION
OF THE NAMIBIAN PROBLEM.' END TEXT
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING PROCEEDINGS, WALVIS BAY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 26 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PRETOR04278
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780306-0909
Format: TEL
From: PRETORIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780718/aaaaaphr.tel
Line Count: 128
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: eefa576c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1879937
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NAMIBIA: PRESS ACCOUNTS ON WALVIS BAY TACTICS AT NEW YORK
TAGS: PORG, PDEV, WA
To: STATE USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/eefa576c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014